Separate Ministry for Kashmir affairs

*444. SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA:
SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether experts have given a suggestion for creating a separate Ministry for Kashmir Affairs in view of the failure to check terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir valley; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L. K. ADVANI): (a) No such proposal has been made to the Government of India.

(b) Question does not arise.

Special Packages for North-East

*447. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government stand committed to implement the special packages of programmes for speedy economic development of the North-Eastern States as announced by the two former Prime Ministers;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken for their early implementation; and

(c) what is the progress of work in the various programmes of development under these packages?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government stands committed to implement the special package of programmes for speedy economic development of North-Eastern States as announced by the two former Prime Ministers. A Cell in the Prime Minister's Office and the North-East Division in the Ministry of Home Affairs are regularly monitoring the implementation of the package.

(c) The progress of work in respect of certain major programmes is as follows:—

(i) Power The Doyang Hydro-electric Project (75MW) is likely to be commissioned by May 2000 and Ranganadi Hydro-electric Project (405 MW) by September, 2001. The Turial HEP (60 MW) and the Loktak Downstream HEP (90 MW) have been sanctioned.

(ii) Roads 12 new National Highways or extension of the existing National Highways have been sanctioned during the last two years with a length of 1962 Kms. 8 roads under the NEC Plan have also been sanctioned recently at a total cost of Rs. 258.24 crores.

(iii) Railways The bridge at Jogighopa and the line from Jogighopa to Guwahati have been completed and commissioned (142 Kms.) at a cost of Rs. 461.94 crores. Work on 1218.25 Kms. of railway lines, including Kumargahat-Agartala railway line (119 Kms.), have been taken up.

(iv.) Civil Aviation The works relating to extension of apron at Guwahati airport has been completed. A modern radar has also been installed at that airport. Schemes for tire upgradation of airports at Agartala, Dibrugarh, Dimapur, Jorhat, and Lilabari have been undertaken.

(v) Education Infrastructure development for the Nagaland University at a cost of Rs. 10 crores is under implementation. It is also proposed to establish a Central University at Aizwal (Mizoram).*

(vi) Petroleum and Natural Gas The Numaligarh Refinery Project has been dedicated to the Nation on July 9, 1999. The total expenditure on this project was Rs. 2489.12 crores. The LPG Bottling Plant at Bogaingaon at a cost Rs. 31.68 crores has been sanctioned.

(vii) Border Area Development Programme (Myanmar) The Border Area Development Programme has been extended to States bordering not only Myanmar, but also China and Bhutan.

(viii) Industrial Growth Centre The Government has approved following eight Industrial Growth Centres:—

1. Charjduar Growth Centre in Assam.
2. Matia Growth Centre, Assam.
3. Niklok Ngorlung Growth Centre, Arunachal Pradesh.
4. Mendipathar Growth Centre, Meghalaya.
5. Luahgmual Growth Centre, Mizoram.
6. Lamlai-Napet Growth Centre, Manipur
7. Ganeshnagar Growth Centre, Nagaland.
8. Bodhjung Nagar Growth Centre, Tripura.

In addition to these, Chaygaon Growth Centre, Assam is under process.

The New Industrial Policy for the North- East has also been announced.

(ix) Health For the Naga Hospital at Kohima, a sum of Rs. 8 crores was been released in 1998-99 for referral facilities from Central Pool of Resources.

(x) Drinking Water The Aizawl Urban Drinking Water Supply Scheme and the Itanagar-Naharlagun Water Supply Scheme have been sanctioned.

Water Scarcity in Gujarat

*450. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have assured that the water scarcity will be eliminated during this year;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken in this direction;

(c) the number of handpumps and tubewells set up in Gujarat which was recently in drought; and

(d) whether Government would give a package to Gujarat on priority?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA): (a) and (b) The National Agenda for Governance of the Government, *inter-alia,* envisages to provide access to drinking water facilities to all rural habitations in five years time. As Drinking Water Supply is a State subject, and the programmes to provide Drinking water facilities are implemented by the State Governments, all the States/UTs were requested to prepare action plans to provide Drinking Water facilities to all rural habitations in five years time. All the States/UTs, except Orissa, Manipur, A&N Islands, Chandigarh and Daman and Diu have prepared their respective action plans for time-bound implementation, subject to availability of funds.

(c) As per the information furnished by the State Government, as on 1st April 1999, 91268 handpumps and 7998 piped water supply schemes have been installed in Gujarat.

(d) It is primarily the responsibility of the State Government to undertake immediate relief measures in the wake of natural calamities from the allocation to the State under the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF). The entire Central share of